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**Correspondence from Selected North County Cities to
VTA Board**

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March 2, 2004

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Mr. Don Gage, Chairman
Board of Directors
Santa Clara County Valley Transportation Authority
3331 North First Street, Building B-2
San Jose, CA 95134

BOARD SECRETARY

Dear Chairman Gage and members of the board,

Thank you for your leadership in this time of organizational and financial crisis.

This letter focuses on the VTP 2030 project priorities that we must soon submit to Metropolitan Transportation Commission, and particularly on transit project priorities. The portfolio of projects we choose will help determine the shape of the valley's fifteen cities for the next quarter century. Our taxpayers and constituents are counting on our leadership to provide an intelligently designed, cost-effective, time-efficient, and flexible system for the changing economy and society.

Given that the priorities should be based on demographic travel forecasts, we are concerned about the staff recommendations issued for the February 27, 2004 Board Workshop. Until 2030, the only projects proposed to be funded are the Downtown East Valley, BART and operating assistance. Most of the other Measure A projects are delayed until beyond 2030. If bonding costs are included or if more conservative revenue or cost projections are used, these Measure A projects could fall off the list entirely. Caltrain electrification and new corridors are not included at all. Yet, the VTP 2020 travel forecasts showed the largest increase in travel demand in the northwest area of the county.

We respectfully request the Board allocate funding within the 25-year VTP 2030 plan for projects that are important to supporting the needs of our area:

- Bus Rapid Transit (\$33M)
- Caltrain Service Upgrades (\$155M)
- Dumbarton Rail (\$44M)
- Caltrain electrification (\$233M)
- Palo Alto Intermodal Center (\$50)

These total \$505 million or approximately one-eighth of the Measure A revenue projection for the next 25 years. We also request a reasonable fraction be implemented within the expenditure plan for the next ten years.

Next, as the criteria for ranking VTA projects was developed in 2001, and our financial outlook has changed dramatically since then, we recommend that:

- 1) Criteria be developed which measures cost-effectiveness of each project under consideration (e.g. cost/ rider vs. increasing ridership regardless of cost).

2) That the VTA assign more than 5 points, out of 100 points, to reasonable assurance of funding.

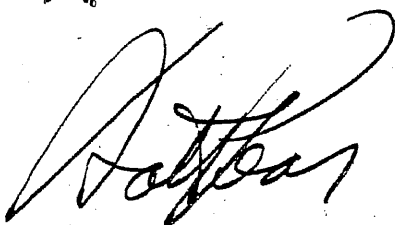
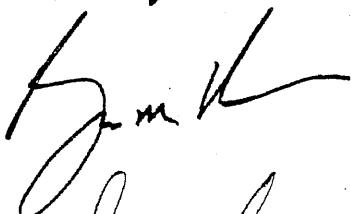
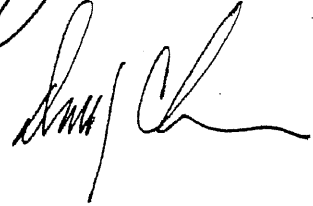
We realize that by revising the criteria, project rankings may change. However, if we expect to go to our taxpayers with another tax measure, we believe it vital to be forthright about the true range of options, trade-offs and risks.

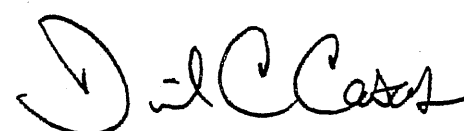
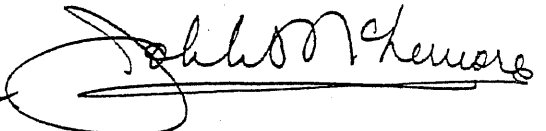
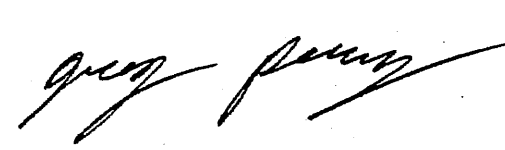
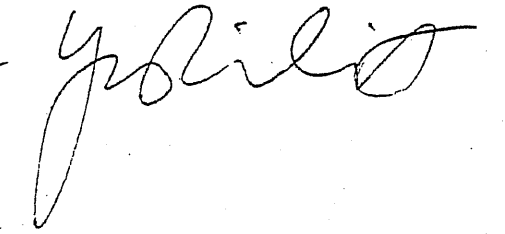

In sum, VTP2030 is not a routine update of the last plan. Measure A was supported county-wide because it promised many projects including BART, clean-air buses, light rail, expansion and electrification of Caltrain and other projects.

The VTA still faces a fiscal crisis, even with reduced operations. Compounding this issue is an uncertain future for federal and state funding for maintenance and capital improvements. We need to look at the painful facts candidly, and make new choices in this constrained environment. Although we expect the economy to improve in time, our transportation system must be trim, flexible, and smart to ensure success for the entire County through future business cycles to come.

We look forward to a constructive dialogue.

Sincerely yours,

Signatories so far:

David Casas (Los Altos City Council, VTA Board)

Emily Cheng (Los Altos Hills Town Council)

Dean Chu (Sunnyvale City Council, VTA Policy Advisory Committee)

Breene Kerr (Los Altos Hill Town Council, VTA Board alternate and PAC)

Yoriko Kishimoto (Palo Alto City Council, VTA Policy Advisory Committee)

John McLemore (Santa Clara City Council, VTA and MTC Board)

Matt Pear

Greg Perry (Mountain View City Council, VTA Policy Advisory Committee)

The letter is signed by individual council and board members and is in process of being reviewed for respective city council adoptions by March 19th.

